

SENATE RECORD VOTE ANALYSIS

106th Congress
1st Session

Vote No. 20

February 23, 1999, 2:18 p.m.
Page S-1755 Temp. Record

MILITARY PAY & RETIREMENT/Retirement & Federal Employment

SUBJECT: Soldiers', Sailors', Airmen's, and Marines' Bill of Rights Act of 1999 . . . S. 4. Crapo amendment No. 9.

ACTION: AMENDMENT AGREED TO, 87-11

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. 4, the Soldiers', Sailors', Airmen's, and Marines' Bill of Rights Act of 1999: will authorize a 4.8-percent military pay raise, effective January 1, 2000; will reform the military pay tables; will revise the military retirement system; will authorize active duty military personnel to participate in the Thrift Savings Plan; will revise benefits under the Montgomery G.I. Bill; will authorize a special subsistence allowance for enlisted military personnel who demonstrate eligibility for food stamps; and will require an annual report on the impact of these changes on recruitment and retention.

The Crapo amendment would repeal the current-law provision that reduces retirement pay for regular officers of the uniformed services who are employed by the Federal Government after retiring from the military (the reduction does not apply to enlisted or reserve personnel; the reduction starts after the first \$8,000 in compensation; waivers can be granted on a case-by-case basis).

Those favoring the amendment contended:

Under current law, regular officers of the uniformed services lose part of their retirement benefits if they go to work for the Federal Government. No other military personnel have their benefits cut if they work for the Federal Government after retiring. This provision is unfair because retired officers have earned their benefits. Further, it is harmful to the Federal Government because highly skilled military officers who otherwise would have taken Federal Government civilian jobs often take private sector jobs instead in order to preserve their full military retirement benefits. No additional discretionary funds are needed to pay for the costs of this amendment. All of the funding will come from the uniformed services retirement fund, which has ample reserves. Retired officers have earned their retirement pay, and they should get it no matter where they work after leaving the military. If our colleagues agree then they should join us in voting in favor of this amendment.

(See other side)

YEAS (87)				NAYS (11)		NOT VOTING (1)	
Republican (44 or 83%)		Democrats (43 or 96%)		Republicans (9 or 17%)	Democrats (2 or 4%)	Republicans (1)	Democrats (0)
Abraham	Hatch	Akaka	Kerrey	Grams	Dodd	Shelby ⁻²	
Allard	Helms	Baucus	Kerry	Grassley	Feingold		
Ashcroft	Hutchinson	Bayh	Kohl	Gregg			
Bennett	Hutchison	Biden	Landrieu	Kyl			
Bond	Inhofe	Bingaman	Lautenberg	McCain			
Brownback	Jeffords	Boxer	Leahy	Nickles			
Bunning	Lott	Breaux	Levin	Sessions			
Burns	Lugar	Bryan	Lieberman	Stevens			
Campbell	Mack	Byrd	Lincoln	Thompson			
Chafee	McConnell	Cleland	Mikulski				
Cochran	Murkowski	Conrad	Moynihan				
Collins	Roberts	Daschle	Murray				
Coverdell	Roth	Dorgan	Reed			VOTING PRESENT (1) Gorton EXPLANATION OF ABSENCE: 1—Official Business 2—Necessarily Absent 3—Illness 4—Other SYMBOLS: AY—Announced Yea AN—Announced Nay PY—Paired Yea PN—Paired Nay	
Craig	Santorum	Durbin	Reid				
Crapo	Smith, Bob	Edwards	Robb				
DeWine	Smith, Gordon	Feinstein	Rockefeller				
Domenici	Snowe	Graham	Sarbanes				
Enzi	Specter	Harkin	Schumer				
Fitzgerald	Thomas	Hollings	Torricelli				
Frist	Thurmond	Inouye	Wellstone				
Gramm	Voinovich	Johnson	Wyden				
Hagel	Warner	Kennedy					

Compiled and written by the staff of the Republican Policy Committee—Larry E. Craig, Chairman

Those opposing the amendment contended:

Our colleagues are correct that the current provision that cuts retired officers' benefits if they work for the Federal Government is unfair to retired officers and harmful to the Federal Government. However, changing that provision will have costs. The retirement reserve fund does not have piles of cash in it waiting to be spent anymore than does any other trust fund of the Government. If more money were spent this year on military retirement, then the ledger entry in the Government's books for the military retirement trust fund would be decreased by the amount of that increase, and, if no other changes were made, total Federal spending would also increase by the amount of that increase. Under that scenario, the Government would end up with less money to spend to enact reforms to save Social Security. The Crapo amendment would follow that scenario, because it does not offer any way to pay for its costs. Eventually, it is true, we could find a way to pay for it without dipping into the funds that should be saved for Social Security reforms. The other options we have are to increase taxes, cut other defense spending, or cut non-defense spending. Some of us who oppose this amendment would favor it if the third option were followed; those of us against this amendment who are more liberal like the first two options. We agree, however, that we should not just increase total spending as proposed by this amendment. Therefore, though we support the purpose of the amendment, we must vote against it.